

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the remarks that follow. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 12 are amended and claims 10, 11, 29, 30, 40, 43 and 46 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, to seek an allowance of the application with the currently allowed claims without further delay. However, Applicant reserves the right to continue to prosecute claims directed to the subject matter of cancelled claims (including, but not limited to cancelled claims 29, 30, 40, 43 and 46) in further patent applications, as appropriate.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 10, 13, 14, 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bloom (USP 5,569,958). In addition, claims 5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloom (USP 5,569,958).

In response, claim 1 is amended herein to include the subject matter of claim 11 and intervening claim 10. Claim 11 was identified by the Examiner as being allowable, if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base and any intervening claims. Accordingly, by the present amendment, claim 1 is equivalent to an independent version of claim 11 (including intervening claim 10). Accordingly, claim 1, as amended, is in condition for allowance, at least for the reasons that the Examiner indicated that claim 11 would be allowable, if rewritten to be in independent form and to include any intervening claims. The rejection of claim 1 is, therefore, respectfully traversed.

Claims 3-9, 13, 14, 39, 42 and 45 are each dependent (directly or indirectly) on claim 1 and, thus, are believed to be in condition for allowance, at least for reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 2, 10, 11, 15-30, 40, 43 and 46 are or have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, the rejection of those claims is moot.

Applicant notes with appreciation, the Examiner's indication that claims 31-38 are allowed. Claims 31-38 remain in the application in their allowed form. Claims 41, 44 and 47 are

each dependent on claim 31 and are believed to be in condition for allowance at least for reasons that claim 31 is allowed.

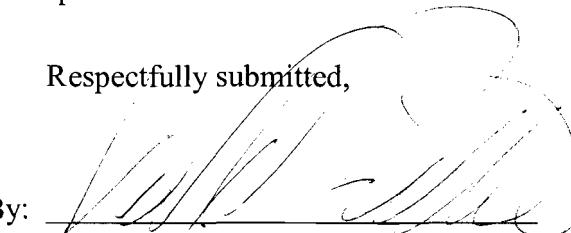
Also, while claims 11 and 12 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that those claims would be allowable, if rewritten to be in independent form including all of the limitations of the base and any intervening claims. As discussed above, the subject matter of claim 11 has been incorporated into amended claim 1. Claim 12 is amended to be dependent on claim 1.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0872. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 50-0872. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0872.

Respectfully submitted,

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